

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 65-93 (cancelled)

94. (Reinstated - formerly claim #35 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock in the form of a cold-pressed tablet or pellet for use in extrusion of an extruded product containing PVA, the cold-pressed tablet or pellet comprising, by weight, a blend of:

40 to 70% PVA; ~~and up to 5% lubricant by weight to render the blend extrudable.~~

8 to 15% plasticizer;

0.5 to 1.5% internal lubricant;

0.0001 to 0.1% external lubricant; and

a filler.

95. (Reinstated - formerly claim #36 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim 35 94 wherein the internal lubricant comprises a fatty acid amide.

96. (Reinstated - formerly claim #37) A polymer feedstock according to claim 36 95 wherein the fatty acid amide is a straight or branched C₁₂-C₂₄ fatty acid amide.

97. (Reinstated - formerly claim #39 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~38~~ 94 wherein the plasticiser is selected from the group consisting of ethylene glycol, glycerol, triethylene glycol, low molecular weight polyethylene glycols and C₂-C₈ amides.

98. (Reinstated - formerly claim #42 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~41~~ 94 wherein the filler comprises inert, inorganic material.

99. (Reinstated - formerly claim #43 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~41~~ 94 wherein the filler comprises a superabsorbent material.

100. (Reinstated - formerly claim #44 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~42 or 43~~ 94 wherein the filler comprises both an inert, inorganic material and superabsorbent material.

101. (Reinstated - formerly claim #45 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~42, 43 or 44~~ 98 wherein the inorganic filler comprises calcium carbonate.

102. (Reinstated - formerly claim #46 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 94 comprising, by weight, up to 50% filler. ~~, up to 5% lubricant and up to 20% of a plasticizer.~~

103. (Reinstated - formerly claim #49 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~48~~ 94 wherein the ~~additional~~ external lubricant comprises a stearate.

104. (Reinstated - formerly claim #50 - currently amended) A PVA-containing polymer feedstock in the form of a cold-pressed tablet or pellet comprising, by weight:-

- 40 to 80% PVA;
- 5 to 50% filler;
- 5 to 15% plasticizer; and
- 0.5 to 2.5% internal lubricant.

105. (Reinstated - formerly claim #51 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~50~~ 104, comprising, by weight:-

- 40 to 70% PVA;
- 20 to 50% filler;
- 8 to 15% plasticizer;

0.5 to 1.5% internal lubricant; and

0.0001 to 0.1% external lubricant.

106. (Reinstated - formerly claim #52 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~50 or 51~~ 104, wherein a fatty acid amide is provided as internal lubricant.

107. (Reinstated - formerly claim #53 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~50, 51 or 52~~ 105 wherein stearate is provided as external lubricant.

108. (Reinstated - formerly claim #54 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to claim ~~51~~ 105 comprising, by weight:-

50 to 60% PVA ;

30 to 40% stearate-coated calcium carbonate;

8 to 15% glycerol;

0.5 to 1.5% octadecanamide; and

0.0001 to 0.1% zinc stearate.

109. (Reinstated - formerly claim #55 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 94 prepared substantially without melting of the PVA.

110. (Reinstated - formerly claim #56 - currently amended) A polymer feedstock according to ~~any preceding~~ claim 94 having a moisture content less than about 10% by weight but greater than 0.01% to bind the pellets or tablets.

111. (Reinstated - formerly claim #57 - currently amended) A method of making a PVA-containing polymer feedstock according to claim 94 comprising blending the PVA with the plasticizer, the internal lubricant, the external lubricant and the filler, said internal lubricant including a fatty acid amide, in the presence of an amount of moisture sufficient to bind the

polymer feedstock into tablets or pellets upon cold pressing and cold pressing the feedstock into tablets or pellets.

112. (Reinstated - formerly claim #58 - currently amended) A method according to claim ~~57~~ 111 comprising blending, in a high speed blender, the PVA with up to 5% by weight of and the internal lubricant.

113. (Reinstated - formerly claim #59 - currently amended) A method according to ~~any of claims 56 to 58~~ 111 comprising adding moisture to the components to be blended.

114. (Reinstated - formerly claim #60 - currently amended) A method according to ~~any claims 57 to 59~~ 111 wherein PVA and lubricant are fed into a high speed mixer gravimetrically.

115. (Reinstated - formerly claim #61 - currently amended) A method of making a PVA-containing polymer feedstock ~~comprising blending PVA and a filler~~ according to claim 111, wherein the filler comprises a superabsorbent material.

116. (Reinstated - formerly claim #63 - currently amended) A method of extruding a PVA-containing polymer feedstock comprising forming a feedstock according to claim 94 ~~blending PVA and at least one of a lubricant and a filler to form a feedstock for an extrusion process, the feedstock being in the form of pellets or tablets,~~ and extruding the feedstock into a product, wherein the feedstock is prepared substantially without melting of the PVA.